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Grey Tangos With Cash In Silver Age

Thought the Image Universe and the Marvel Universe were two different places? On more than one occasion in the recent past, readers have discovered that there were intriguing links between these two comic book universes—and the two worlds are about to meet again in ***WildCATs/X-Men: The Silver Age***.

For Jim Lee, who is pencilling this latest crossover book involving the two superteams, it was only natural that the two worlds should in effect co-exist. "The idea to have them already co-exist in one universe allowed for the greatest number and variety of stories, since we don't have to go through the whole process of explaining how these characters from two different universes get together in the first place. We just sat down and figured out what parts of our histories fit together best." The resulting entertwined history has cropped up previously in ***Team 7/Team X*** and ***Wild CATs/X-Men: The Golden Age*** and will be at the center of upcoming crossover adventures as well.

Jim Lee, who could have chosen to illustrate any of the crossover books that WildStorm was producing, picked ***The Silver Age*** in particular—and there were good reasons why. "Jean was one of my favorite characters from my early fan days, and she was one of the characters I did not do much with during my tenure on the title," Lee said. "Cole Cash, aka the Grifter, remains one of my favorite WildCATS because I think he has the most personality. Also, from the standpoint that this is a story set in the 70's, both these characters had unusual enough backstories or gaps in their continuities to make this teamup possible. This story is set around the time Jean was flirting with the idea of modeling and Cole is wandering the earth after the breakup of Team 7. Finally, their pairing sparks romantic stirrings which opens up a whole different can of worms.

"One of the reasons I chose this chapter was that I didn't want to repeat myself. I'm essentially dealing with the X-Men of the Neal Adams/Roy Thomas era—an era which got me hooked on the X-Men and comics in general. I think I drew all of one pinup of those classic X-men during my first run at Marvel. This project is a great opportunity for me to go back and have some fun. As far as the WildCATS—it's a great opportunity to retroactively create some interesting continuity which I think will definitely surprise fans and readers of the book."

Another character who plays an important role in this story is Nick Fury, who brings Cole Cash into the action at the beginning of the book. "This is during the early SHIELD days, and he plays the catalyst which brings the two heroes together. As always, he has his own agenda—but he serves to bring down evil, not cause it." And readers might want to pay attention for a number of interesting guest stars. "There are many cameos—Gambit, Zealot, Cyclops, Banshee, etc.—as the title of the story is '15 Minutes.'"

Is there a chance that at some point in the future, Lee will offer readers a chance to see his version of the contemporary X-Men line-up? "I doubt it—my interests lie in doing new things—and to me, the contemporary X-Men are so different from what I worked on that it wouldn't feel like the X-Men to me. Not to say what has been done in the past six years or so isn't good or valid, in fact, I think the X-creators have done some excellent, very exciting work—it's just that after my run, I kind of stopped following all the ins and outs of the X-mythology. I think this is probably true of most creators after they depart titles."

WildCATs/X-Men: The Silver Age is the second book in as many months to feature Jim Lee's artwork (last month, he guest-illustrated ***Stormwatch #47***). Does this mean that, after a time in which the business side of Image seemed to keep him away from the drawing board, fans will be seeing more Lee-illustrated comics coming up? "Absolutely," he said. "That's why I got in this business—to draw comics—and that will be my main focus in the coming years, along with shepherding the creative growth of the WildStorm line! Look for a lot of exciting work in the coming years!"

Look for the excitement to hit comic shops on June 25th, when ***WildCATs/X-Men: The Silver Age #1***—a $4.50 comic written by Scott Lobdell, pencilled by Jim Lee, and inked by Scott Williams—is scheduled for release.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Zero At the Bone

Comic book fans know the X-Men as heroes, but to many in the Marvel Universe, their motivations and methods are suspect. In the aftermath of Onslaught and the unexpected assassination of Graydon Creed, people are more worried than ever about the power that mutants wield... and that's going to lead to some very bad times for the X-Men and their friends.

The X-Men have never had it easy—from their earliest days, they have been mistrusted because they were mutants—but the animosity leads to an attempt to purge the Marvel Universe of mutants in Zero Tolerance, a storyline running through many of the core mutant books this summer.

"The storyline revolves around the villain named Bastion, a character who has been popping in and out of various titles for the past year," Associate Editor Mark Powers said. "Bastion is the head and architect of a multi-national task force called Operation: Zero Tolerance. Because of the Onslaught affair and the assassination of Graydon Creed, this group has gained support throughout the world. Now, to put it simply, the gloves are off in the ever-escalating conflict between humans and mutants. Bastion and company will come after the X-Men with both barrels and impunity."

The beginnings of the storyline appeared last month, when Operation: Zero Tolerance launched its initial attacks. They're taking hostages and seizing control of one of the most valuable tools they could hope for in their war: the Xavier Estate. Once Bastion gains control of it, "he now has access to every secret the X-Men have, which are spelled out in the Xavier Protocols," Powers explained. To be blunt, he's got the X-Men by the you-know-whats."

The real surprise comes when the X-Men—at least, those of the team who are on this planet!—fall at the very onset of Bastion's attack. This means that "characters who've previously been solely members of the Underground—or who have rejected Xavier's offer to join the X-Men outright—must step to the fore," Powers said.

Cable is the first to launch his attack in ***Cable #45*** (June 4th); James Robinson and Randy Green tell the story of Cable's siege on the X-Mansion. The same week, Marrow and Spider-Man have to fill in for the X-Team still trapped on the far side of the universe; in ***Uncanny X-Men #346***, produced by Scott Lobdell, Joe Madureira, and Tim Townsend, fans will see how this odd couple fare against Operation: Zero Tolerance.

On June 18th, the saga continues in ***X-Men #66***, when readers meet a new character who is destined to become a member of the team. In this tale by Scott Lobdell, Carlos Pacheco, and Art Thibert, the war begins to affect innocents who had thought they could stay clear of the conflict.

Wolverine #115 (June 25th) reunites veteran X-Men Wolverine and Cyclops, who realize that their only hope for victory lies with Professor Xavier... if they can find him in time. From this point through the end of the summer, the chronicles of the core X-Men team of Wolverine, Storm, Cannonball, Cyclops, and Jean Gray will appear only in the pages of Wolverine, courtesy of Larry Hama and Leinel Francis Yu.

Maggot—one of characters likely to join the X-Men later this year—plays a crucial role in ***Uncanny X-Men #347*** (July 2nd). The X-Men are lost in time and space, where they're confronted by an old enemy; meanwhile, Maggot is searching for Joseph, the mutant formerly known as Magneto.

Cable #46 (July 2nd) continues Cable and Caliban's inside war against Bastion and his army, trying desperately to make a last stand inside the Xavier Institute. Will this storyline reveal the final fate of Caliban? Be on hand to find out!

Generation X #30 (July 9th) also ties in to the Zero Tolerance storyline as James Robinson and Chris Bachalo focus on the Gen Xer's last stand against the forces of Zero Tolerance in the sewers of Los Angeles. Meanwhile, the White Queen and Banshee have some difficult decisions to make when Emplate makes an offer that's all too tempting...

Icemen is joined by the mutant Cecilia Reyes in ***X-Men #67*** (July 16th). While the two try to evade a newly-enhanced Prime Sentinel, an Israeli Mossad agent flees her country with information that could lead to the destruction of Bastion and Operation: Zero Tolerance.

Wolverine #116 (July 23rd) continues the saga of the entire X-team as they escape from Bastion's converted Hulkbuster base and flee into the deserts of New Mexico. But will the small town they stumble across be even more threatening than the desert's heat?

Operation: Zero Tolerance comes to a dramatic climax in August, as the ultimate confrontation between the mutants and Bastion's forces leads to some major changes in team line-ups—not only will new members be added, but some old favorites might be leaving the team... the hard way.

"Zero Tolerance is the evolution—or mutation—of the X-Men," Powers said. "It's been nearly six years since we fundamentally shook up these teams. We'll introduce new characters into the rosters of the X-Men and X-Force. In addition, because of story events, these characters will be thrust into new situations and thus interact with different characters than we're accustomed to, all the while adhering to the concept of 'protecting a world that fears and hates them.'"

The lives of the X-Men and their fellow mutants have never been particularly stable or easy in the past, but it appears that the next three months will be the summer that they'll remember as the most challenging in their history... if they survive it.

by WAYNE LEE

COMIC SHOP NEWS
#174
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QUICKSHOTS

Do You Copy?

If you have a strange feeling of *deja vu* when you see Acclaim's Valiant Heroes covers during the month of July, there's an explanation for it: it's Copycat Cover Month! "For one month, the covers of all our regular monthly Valiant Heroes books are altering their design format to do one of two things: pay tribute to or be a parody of a vintage Golden Age, Silver Age, or recent (what are we calling comics that came out two months ago? Rusted Aluminum Age?) comic," Acclaim publisher *Fabian Nicieza* said. "And we're doing it for one reason: the sheer fun of it!"

Astute readers will recognize cover homages that range from ***Action Comics #1*** (copied on ***Magnus Robot Fighter #7***) to ***Superman #123*** (***Trinity Angels #5***). Not only is it oodles of fun figuring out what cover inspired what, but it's also interesting to speculate why certain covers were used for certain books—for instance, did *Steranko's* ***SHIELD*** inspire a ***Bloodshot*** cover because both of them are suspense-espionage-intrigue books, or is it a coincidence? Come up with your own explanations if you wish—or just have fun with these great cover recreations! ***Ninjak #9, Troublemakers #8, Magnus #7, Trinity Angels #5, Quantum & Woody #6, Shadowman #9, X-O Manowar #10,*** and ***Bloodshot #5*** are all included in Copycat Cover Month—so collect the whole set!

COMIC SHOP NEWS
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Editorial Office:
2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (770) 973-6949
cliffbig@netdepot.com

Business Office:
1266 W. Paces Ferry Rd. #445
Atlanta, GA 30327
(404) 261-8101
wardo@netdepot.com

Visit our WWW site at:
http://www.dreamsville.com/CSN/

Editors
Cliff Biggers & Ward Batty

Publisher
Comic Shop News, Inc.

Oh, the Pain...

You'd assume that, after having to confront the Darkness, Painkiller Jane would be ready to retire... but quite the contrary, she's ready to go back into action again, no matter what the risk! Good thing, too—otherwise, they'd have to fill the pages of the monthly Painkiller Jane comic with grocery lists, junk mail, and the like. Don't worry about dull mundanity creeping into Painkiller Jane's life, though—she's too busy dodging hostile fire... ***Painkiller Jane #1*** is written by *Mark Wait* and *Brian Augustyn*, acclaimed for their work on *The Flash* at DC. They're joined by artists *Rick Leonardi* and *Jimmy Palmiotti* to present an over-the-top tale of ultra-violence and crime that makes *Pulp Fiction* look like it belongs on the Cartoon Network.

Co-writer *Brian Augustyn* describes Jane as "a truly compelling character... so deeply scarred and psychically damaged that she seems to have no reason to live—but no way to die, either. Still, I think she has a steel-strong inner strength an an even stronger desire for redemption that drives her on..."

In the first issue, Jane is enlisted by her arch-enemy, a mobster who needs her help to find his six-year-old daughter, who's been kidnapped by some brutal and very impatient thugs. At the same time, Lt. Maureen Fernandez—sister of Ashley Quinn, who's already generating some heat of his own in the Event Universe—begins to investigate a series of bizarre murders... and you can rest assured that, sooner or later, Jane will get involved in this case, too. See the red-leather-clad heroine swing into solo action in ***Painkiller Jane #1***, a $2.95 June release from Event Comics that will be released with two covers—one by *Joe Quesada* and one by *Rick Leonardi*.

CSNsider

DC has announced that they will be collecting *Jack Kirby's* original run of ***New Gods*** in a black and white 300+ page trade paperback volume in August. This will mark the first time that the entire New Gods run has been reprinted—and considering how important Kirby's Fourth World concepts are to the current DC Universe, it's very appropriate that today's readers should be able to enjoy the entire saga...

It looks like *Alan Davis* will be joining *Scott Lobdell* on ***Fantastic Four***; Davis will be illustrating at least the first few issues of the post-Heroes Reborn FF... Look for Computo to appear as the villain in ***Legion of Super-Heroes #98-100***... Fox will assemble some of the best ***Mad-TV*** sketches for a prime-time show set to run on Monday nights at 8:00 PM EDT beginning on June 9th...

Jon Lewis, creator of the Spectacles comic book series published by Alternative Press, Inc. will be involved in designing Microsoft® Plus! for Kids, a program designed to allow children and families to create personal desktops while learning how to use Windows... Shi and Vampirella will cross paths in a crossover book later this year; Harris will release a preview of the crossover book in July...

Tempest in a teacup: Variety reported on 5/15 that *Jim Carrey* would be cast as Brainiac in the new ***Superman Lives!*** film, only to reverse themselves on 5/16... Will he or won't he? E! Entertainment is reporting that *Nicholas Cage* will definitely play Superman, while other sources say it's not a lock yet...

TV's most popular warrior woman, ***Xena: Warrior Princess***, will star in her own two-issue miniseries from Topps beginning in mid-August. *Roy Thomas* and *Joyce Chin* are handling the creative honors... At long last, Topps' ***X-Files Season One*** series adapting X-Files episodes as 48-page comics is ready for launch. The first adaptation, by *Roy Thomas*, *Claude St. Aubin*, and *Rick Magyar*, should appear in August; look for an variant cover edition that will make up 20% of the print run. A week before the series debuts, Topps will rerelease their adaptation of the ***X-Files*** pilot episode...

Gary Cohn, co-creator of ***Amethyst*** and ***Blue Devil***, has announced that he will be writing and editing a new book, ***Tzu the Reaper***, debuting in September from Murim Studios; the book, based on a popular Asian comic, isn't a reprint, but is created specifically for the American comics market...

Barry Blair's ***Elfford***, most recently published by Mad Monkey Press, moves to Warp Graphics beginning in September. *Barry Blair* and *Colin Chan*, the creators of the series, will work in two elfworlds, as they will continue to create ***ElfQuest*** tales as well as producing new ***Elfford*** stories...

Ain't It Cool News reports that the ***Luke Cage, Hero For Hire*** film that is in development at Ed Pressman films is, for the most part, amazingly accurate to the comic book series... Are there troubles at Kitchen Sink Press? There are reports of layoffs, cutbacks, and delays of most published projects, largely due to increasing financial pressures. Even those who work on Kitchen Sink's books are unsure what the future will bring...

QUICKSHOTS

Cave Exploring

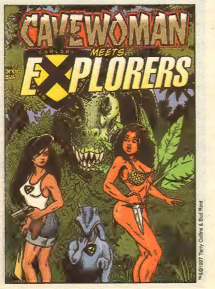
When an entire town disappears, you'd expect the government to call in investigators, wouldn't you? Well, that's just what they do when Marshville, Oregon, vanishes from the face of the Earth—and the investigators they call in are specialists in the offbeat. But even they are in for a bit of a surprise when their investigation takes them seventy million years into the past, where they discover that the people of Marshville are alive and doing the best they can to cope with life in the Cretaceous era.

Cavewoman/Explorers, a crossover book written by *Explorers* creator *Terry Collins* and illustrated by *Budd Root* and *Bill Neville*, offers one of the strangest cases in the Explorers' career: an entire town transported through time, where they have to cope with life in an era in which human beings aren't welcome. They're doing all right, largely due to the efforts of Meriem Cooper, better known as Cavewoman, who has been largely responsible for the townspeople's survival in this dangerous new world.

Cavewoman/Explorers marks the first crossover tale featuring Budd Root's hit series. "Other folks have approached me about doing a crossover," Root said, "but the story idea or the approach just didn't seem right. With the characters in Explorers, a meeting makes perfect sense. They're a family of scientists who would naturally be attracted to the mysteries featured in *Cavewoman*. Plus, I've always enjoyed Terry and Bill's work, and this was a great chance to collaborate... To me, *Explorers* is a quality book, and one I enjoy reading and want to support."

For Terry Collins, this self-contained one-shot was not only a chance to work with another popular creator, but also a chance to expose both *Explorers* and *Cavewoman* to a new readership. Both creators decided to call even more attention to this book by publishing it through Root's Basement Comics rather than Caliber. "Working with Caliber [the publisher of the *Cavewoman: Rain* and *Explorers*] is rewarding, but we seem to be lost among all of the other titles they offer on a monthly basis. Our goal for this one-shot, in addition to telling an exciting story—and you can't go wrong when you mix dinosaurs, time travel, and attractive, intelligent women—is to increase awareness of *Explorers*. Of course, Budd's the draw here. We're indebted by his willingness to make this happen."

Cavewoman/Explorers, a $2.95 comic, is scheduled for June release. At the same time, Caliber will release *Explorers #3*, which was held back a few months so that its release would coincide with the debut of the crossover one-shot.



Take Me to Alita

Alita may be beautiful, but that beauty is deceptive: she can be a very dangerous cyborg indeed if she's angered—and it seems like a lot of people have angered her. Most of her anger is reserved for one man: the man who took her surrogate father, who abused his son Kaos, and who has no pity on the living or the dead. In *Battle Angel Alita Part Eight*, a nine-issue monthly series by *Yukita Kishiro*, readers will see the ultimate confrontation between Alita and her enemy in this, the final chapter of Alita's epic saga. *Battle Angel Alita Part Eight #1*, a $2.95 comic from Viz Communications, is scheduled for mid-June release.

SHIPPING IN JUNE

SHADOWMAN #8 — JAMIE DELANO, CHARLES ADLARD, FOR MATURE READERS

BLOODSHOT #4 — LEN KAMINSKI, SAL VELLUTO, STEVE GEIGER

TUROK: REDPATH — FABIAN NICIEZA, RAFAEL KAYANAN, RODNEY RAMOS

NINJAK #8 — KURT BUSIEK & ROBERT WASHINGTON III WITH NEIL VOKES & RICH RANKIN

QUANTUM & WOODY #5 — CHRISTOPHER PRIEST, M. D. BRIGHT, GREG ADAMS

WATERWORLD #3of 4 — CHRIS GOLDEN & TOM SNIEGOSKI WITH KEVIN KOBASIC & BARBARA KAALBERG

X-O #9 — BRIAN AUGUSTYN, SCOT EATON, PAM EKLUND

TRINITY ANGELS #4 — KEVIN MAGUIRE, CHARLES YOAKUM

FROM ACCLAIM COMICS

ACCLAIM COMICS VALIANT HEROES

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JUNE HOT PICKS!

CSN HOT PICKS!

by cliff biggers

Summer's here, and the comic shelves are beginning to sizzle. And what a month it is: we have the return of a venerable character from the Golden Age, some surprising team-ups, some of the most exciting creative teams you've found in the pages of single comic in years, and several surprises that you won't want to miss!

Event of the Month

Zero Tolerance
Cable 45
Uncanny X-Men 346
X-Men 66
Wolverine 115
X-Force 68

(Marvel, $1.95/$2.50)

Marvel's mutants are once again the focus of a major storyline—and once again, someone wants to eliminate the X-Men and friends from the Marvel Universe. This time, though, they have the information they need to be successful, because they've taken control of the Xavier Estate and the information contained within its walls. Now it's up to the mutants—the mutants who haven't already fallen before Bastion, that is—to try to regain control of the Xavier Protocols and shut down Operation: Zero Tolerance before Bastion succeeds in his plan... and they're going to need every mutant they can find if they hope to succeed. The storyline begins this month and continues through the summer; by the time it's over, several teams will undergo major changes in membership as the mutant teams are shaken to their core.

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Aliens: Havoc 1

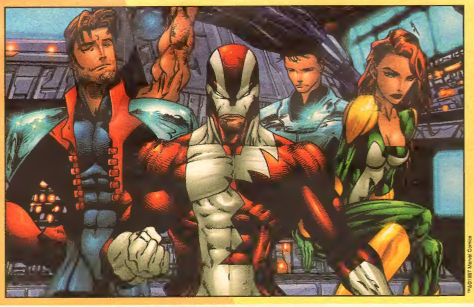
(Dark Horse, $2.95)

It's an artist extravaganza—and we're not talking about a pin-up special! Dark Horse has assembled over three dozen comic book creators to illustrate this two-issue Aliens miniseries—and part of the fun is figuring out who did what without looking at the art credits, so no fair peeking!

Alpha Flight 1

(Marvel, $2.99)

Canada's premiere superteam is back in action... but they aren't all that thrilled about it. This new series by Steven T. Seagle and Scott Clark reunites several members of the original team, filling out the roster with some new members—including one who claims to be the deceased Dr. Hudson! Marvel has had a great track record with its 1996 series debuts; look for the excitement to propel this one to hit status as well.



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Angel Fire 1

(Crusade, $2.95)

Sexy women, fast-paced action, international intrigue—it's no wonder that this one is sure to sizzle! ***Angel Fire #1*** is being offered with three different covers, so pick your fave—or collect the whole set!

Batman & Robin Movie Adaptation

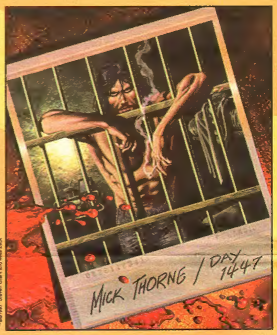
(DC, $5.95/$8.50)

Heck, you don't have to wait until June 20th to find out what happens when Batman, Robin, and Batgirl confront Mr. Freeze, Poison Ivy, and Bane—you can pick up this 64-page adaptation by Denny O'Neil, Rodolfo Damaggio, and Bill Sienkiewicz and get the inside story two weeks ahead of time. And with an art team like that, how can you pass it up? DC's releasing this one in two formats: a deluxe prestige-format edition and a standard comics version, so take your pick.

Damned 1

(Image/Homage, $2.50)

Steven Grant and Mike Zeck delve deep into crime comics territory with this new series-of-miniseries title that will, like ***Sin City,*** offer different glimpses into the underbelly of a big city and those who inhabit it. The first story arc, about an ex-con on parole who has to fulfill a promise he made to a dying cellmate, is sure to appeal to readers of Frank Miller's noir sagas—and Zeck's art here is some of the best he's done in years!



™&©1997 Steve Rude and Mike Zeck

Dawn 6

(Simo, $2.95)

It's the end of an era as Joseph Michael Linsner brings the metaphysical Dawn saga to a dramatic end. No comic art fan wants to say goodbye to *Dawn*—but at least Linsner is ending the series with some of his most impressive work ever.

Daydreamers 1

(Marvel, $2.50)

Here's a real insider's look at Man-Thing!... Franklin Richards, Artie, Leech, Tana Nile, and Howard the Duck, all absorbed into Man-Thing's body, travel through all sorts of strange dimensions in their odyssey to return home. Since

™&©1997 Marvel Comics

JUNE HOT PICKS!

Franklin Richards is reportedly playing a very big role in the upcoming *Heroes Return* storyline, savvy insiders are latching onto this series for clues about what might be upcoming.

Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan: Le Monstre 1

(Dark Horse, $2.95)

Not only is this story a treat for Tarzan fans, since Lovern Kindzierski has filled a gap in the original Tarzan novel, but the artwork is some of the best that Tarzan fans have seen in years! Stan Mamoukian and Vince Roucher have done their best work ever in the pages of this Tarzan-vs-the-Phantom-of-the-Opera miniseries, and every page is a joy to behold.

Flintstones & Jetsons 1

(DC, $1.75)

All of DC's Cartoon Network books are fun, but this is the one that comic fans are going to particularly enjoy. Mike Carlin has written a storyline that, in its own strange way, brings the worlds of the Flintstones and the Jetsons together without sacrificing the feel of the original series.

Gen13 Bootleg 8

(Image, $2.50)

Manga and anime fans, don't miss this one! Adam Warren offers a manga-Gen13 tale—or as close as you're ever going to get—in this three-parter. Grunge, enticed by the allure of Hong Kong cinema, decides he's going to become the next Jackie Chan, and he drags fellow Gen13ers along for the ride. Warren was responsible for last winter's delightful *Titans: Scissors, Paper, Stone* manga-styled one-shot, so you know that he can pull this off like a charm!

Hellboy: Almost Colossus 1

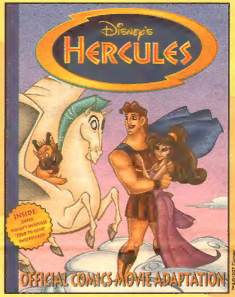
(Dark Horse, $2.95)

It's Hellboy versus Homunculus in this sequel to Wake the Devil. The real appeal isn't the horror/hero adventure, though, but the amazing artistry of Mike Mignola, one of the field's true artist's artists. If that isn't enough, there's also a stunning backup tale by Gary Gianni, whose Leyendeckerish fine-line style would look wonderful on a Doc Savage tale (hint, hint)...

Hepcats 1987-1997: Tenth Anniversary Special

(Antarctic, $4.95/$11.95)

Has it really been ten years since Martin Wagner first introduced fans to the world of his anthropomorphic college students? Must be, since this is a tenth anniversary special! The mixture of new material, retrospectives, and non-Hepcats art by Wagner is sure to please his fans—and those with a penchant for music might want to spring for the Radio Hepcats edition complete with CD.



Hercules Official Comics Movie Adaptation

(Acclaim, $4.50)

The latest Disney film comics to comics courtesy of Acclaim—and once this film hits the theaters, there'll be a flood of younger fans looking for the comic book version to tide 'em over until the video comes out!

Judgment Day: Omega Judgment Day: Final Judgment

(Awesome, $2.50/$3)

Alan Moore totally remolds the Extreme Universe in the final two installments of this compelling epoch-spanning murder mystery. Who killed a member of Youngblood? How does it all relate to the history of the Extreme Universe? How many new characters can Alan Moore introduce in one series? The answers to these, and many more, questions will be found in the pages of these two books. Moore is obviously having oodles of fun with this series—and so are his many fans!

The Kents 1

(DC, $2.50)

There's nary a Superman to be found in the latest Superman family miniseries—but that's not going to stop fans from checking out *The Kents*. is a family history... a history of the family that gave Clark Kent his sense of ethics, his concepts of right and wrong. The emphasis is on humanity, not superheroics, as John Ostrander, Tim Truman, and Michael Bair reveal that Superman isn't the first hero to carry the Kent family name.

Major Bummer 1

(DC, $2.50)

Everyone wants to be a superhero, right? Wrong. Here, readers get to meet the one guy who never dreamed of superheroics—in fact, he never dreamed of much of anything. The ultimate slacker becomes the ultimate superhero in this book by John Arcudi and Doug Mahnke, best known for their work on *The Mask*. Where the Mask is over the top, Major Bummer is under the table—this is a guy who's perfectly happy spending all day doing absolutely nothing, but superpowers seem to bring super-problems of their own...

Painkiller Jane 1

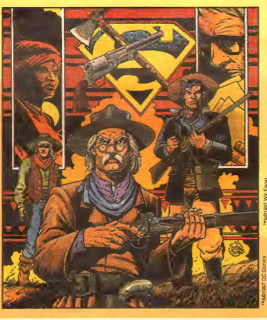
(Event, $2.95)

Rick Leonardi is back on a monthly comic! That's reason enough for this book to be on our Hot Picks list. That's not the only reason, though: Painkiller Jane was a sellout superstar in her crossover adventure with The Darkness, and you can look for this new ongoing series to duplicate that sellout success. And with Mark Waid and Brian Augustyn handling the writing honors, you know this series will read as good as it looks! Looking for a bad girl book with great graphics and solid story sensibilities? Look no further!

Preacher Special: The Good Old Boys

(Vertigo/DC, $4.95)

An army of mobsters with lots of ordnance confront Jody and TC in the swamps of Louisiana. You almost feel sorry for the mobsters, don't you?... Garth Ennis and Carlos Ezquerra venture into action-movie territory as they pit a copy and attorney against the mob's hired muscle... too bad the mob wasn't prepared for these good old boys! There's ultraviolence galore in these pages, along with warped humor and dubious ethics—but if you've read *Preacher*, you knew that already, didn't you?



Psylocke & Angel: Crimson Dawn 1

(Marvel, $2.50)

It's a mutant book. It's a romance. It's two—two—two comics in one! Psylocke is transformed into Crimson Dawn; Angel is trying to adjust to the return of his wings. And the two of them are trying to straighten out the problems that have arisen in their relationship. Oh, yeah—there's also an evil villain named Obsideon they have to deal with. Who says a book can't have something for everyone?!

Spirit: The New Adventures 1

(Kitchen Sink, $3.95)

Don't even *think* about passing this one by when you see it on the comic shop racks. What more could any book offer? A historic comic book char-

JUNE HOT PICKS!

acter who's been around since the dawn of the Golden Age, a classic concept that has inspired comic creators for decades, an archetypal origin tale, and two of the most acclaimed comic book creators in the history of the field—it's all here! Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, the pair who rewrote comics history with ***The Watchmen***, launch this exciting new Spirit series featuring the work of some of the most popular and successful creators the comics field has to offer. Let's face it: comics just don't get much better than this!

TM&©2001 Lucasfilms

Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi—Fall of the Sith Empire 1

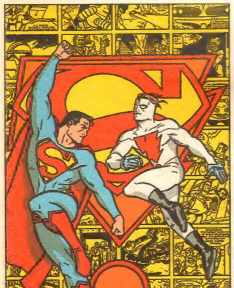
(Dark Horse; $2.95)

Dark Horse takes Star Wars fans back to the pre-Clone Wars era for a grand tale of empires and adventure. This time, the hero isn't a Jedi Knight—she's just an explorer who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Kevin Anderson, popular Star Wars novelist, scripts this new series, which is just one more reason that Star Wars afficionados will consider it a must-have.

Superman • Madman Hullabaloo 1

(Dark Horse; $2.95)

Well, you didn't expect a standard Superman story from Mike Allred, did you? What Mike Allred gives us is the comic book equivalent of those old Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Commercials: "You've got a little Superman in my Madman!" "You've got a little Madman in my Superman!" When these two heroes investigate an energy vortex, things get all mixed up... quite literally! Silver Age fans will love Allred's interpretation of Superman, alternative fans will appreciate the meeting of a comic book icon and an alternative superstar, and comic fans of all sorts should have a great time with this *Hullabaloo*.



TM&©2001 DC Comics & Mike Allred

TM&©2001 Jim Lee & WildStorm Productions

WildCATs • X-Men: The Silver Age 1

(Image; $4.95)

Jim Lee is back on the X-Men! Oh, sure, it's only for one issue, and it's not the contemporary X-Men, but who cares? It's Jim Lee, and it's the X-Men, and it's an Image/Marvel crossover that continues to explore the interrelationship of these two worlds. This time, Grifter and Jean Grey are the focal characters, but readers will find a number of intriguing guest stars in this 48-pager.

Vampirella • Wetworks 1

(Harris; $2.95)

It sort of makes sense, doesn't it? She's a vampire; they're monster hunters. Together, they're detectives! Steven Grant and Sean Shaw have constructed a tale that unites Vampi and Wetworks to stop the Blood Red Queen of Hearts and her cult of death. You might not think at first that a high-tech superteam and a creature of the night would mesh, but trust us—this one works!

Warrior Nun Areala 1

(Chaos!; $2.50)

At long last, the demon-fighting Warrior Nun gets her own ongoing series. Brian Denham and Barry Lyga take readers much deeper into the world of the Warrior Nuns, beginning with a story that has Areala questioning whether there's a continued place for her and her fellow warriors in today's world. The world of Areala is one of the most intriguing and thought-provoking worlds in any comic book universe, and Areala fans will be glad to see it explored on a monthly basis.

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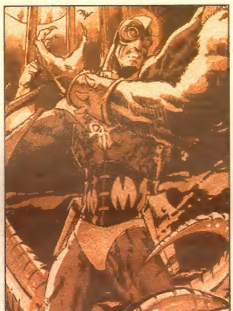
Overlooked Sizzler of the Month

Mr. Monster Presents 1

(Caliber; $2.95)

Long before there was a Hellboy, Mr. Monster waged war against the evil critters who go bump in the night. Now he's back in a new two-issue miniseries from Caliber, and he's got plenty of help as several comic book guest-stars drop in to lend a hand. Michael T. Gilbert is joined by a number of talents for this series that mixes yucks and yoks. Black and white isn't enough for the world's greatest monster fighter: this book features an additional color... blood red! (Well, what else would you have expected?...)



TM&©2001 Michael T. Gilbert

Second Chances

(Here's best reprint selection)

Akiko TPB Vol 1 *(Sirius, $14.95)* - Featuring the first six issues of Mark Crilley's acclaimed all-ages series chronicling a young girl's adventures in a very strange land.

Aliens/Predator: Deadliest of the Species Ltd. Ed. HC *(Dark Horse, $99.95)* - HC edition of the 12-issue miniseries, signed by John Bolton and Chris Claremont.

Backlash/Spider-Man TPB *(Image, $4.95)* - Single-book compilation of two-issue limited series.

Ballads TPB *(Green Man, $9.95)* - 106-page volume reprinting the "Ballads" section of Charles Vess' ***Book of Ballads and Sagas;*** features stories written by Neil Gaiman, Jeff Smith, Sharyn McCrumb, and others.

Batman: The Movies TPB *(DC, $19.95)* - DC's adaptations of all four Batman films (including this summer's ***Batman & Robin***) are featured in this trade paperback.

Bone Vol 4: Dragonslayer TPB *(Cartoon, $16.95)* - Reprinting the Dragonslayer storyline from ***Bone #s 20-27.***

Collected Classics: Horror TPB/HC *(Acclaim, $12.95/$19.95)* - ***Classics Illustrated*** versions of ***Frankenstein, Invisible Man,*** and ***Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*** are collected in one themed reprint volume.

Collected Classics: Shakespeare TPB/HC *(Acclaim, $12.95/$19.95)* - ***Classics Illustrated*** versions of ***Hamlet, Macbeth,*** and ***Romeo & Juliet*** are collected in one themed reprint volume.

Complete Gunfighter/Saddle Justice HC Set *(Gemstone, $100.00)* - Three-volume set, designed to fit in with the EC Library volumes, reprinting Pre-Trend Western series that feature work by many of the EC greats like Wood, Ingels, and Craig.

Complete Jack Kirby Volume One *(Pure Imagination, $25.00)* - Greg Theakston launches an ambitious plan to reprint all the classic Kirby work.

Dinosaurs: A Celebration TPB *(Marvel, $19.99)* - Compilation of Marvel's informative and very accurate four issue series that offered an in-depth look at the giant lizards.

Dirty Pair: Dangerous Acquaintances TPB *(Dark Horse, $12.95)* - Reprinting some of Toren Smith and Adam Warren's early ***Dirty Pair*** work that has been out of print for many years.

Heartbreakers Bust Out! TPB *(Image, $9.95)* - As the Heartbreakers make their move from Dark Horse to Image, this trade paperback paves the way, with reprintings of early Heartbreakers tales from ***DHP, Gay Comics,*** and other sources.

Hellboy: Wake the Devil TPB *(Dark Horse, $17.95)* - Mike Mignola's last ***Hellboy*** miniseries is compiled in one volume at the same time that the sequel is hitting the comic shop racks.

Hercules: Prince of Power TPB *(Marvel, $19.99)* - Both of Bob Layton's acclaimed Hercules series from the 1980's are reprinted in a single volume.

Love & Rockets Volume 15: Hernandez Satyricon TPB/HC/Ltd. Ed. HC *(Fantagraphics, $14.95/$34.95/ $39.95)* - The final uncollected ***Love & Rockets*** material is assembled and reworked by Los Bros Hernandez in this reprint volume.

Luftwaffe 1946 Vol 1 TPB *(Antarctic, $10.95)* - The first Luftwaffe 1946 miniseries is presented in a single volume that complements the current ongoing series.

Monkeyman & O'Brien TPB *(Dark Horse, $16.95)* - The original Art Adams ***Monkeyman & O'Brien Special*** and the first miniseries are assembled in this trade paperback.

Purgatori: The Vampire's Myth TPB *(Chaos!, $9.95)* - All three issues of the trade paperback are included, along with the prelude issue and lots of behind-the-scenes art and text.

Savage Dragon: A Talk With God TPB *(Image, $17.95)* - The metaphysical God versus Satan storyline from ***Savage Dragon #s 27-33*** is compiled in this hefty volume.

Scenes Collection Volume 1 TPB *(Drag 'n' Blast, $13.00)* - Reprinting the first three issues of ***Scenes From the Inside.***

Sensational Spidr-Man in the Savage Land TPB *(Marvel, $6.99)* - Bookshelf-format trade paperback reprints the Ka-Zar storyline by Todd DeZago and Mike Wieringo.

Skeleton Key: The Celestial Calendar TPB *(Amaze Ink, $19.95)* - Hefty helping of ***Skeleton Key***—this volume offers the entire storyline that appeared in issues seven through eighteen.

Spawn Volume 4 TPB *(Image, $9.95)* - ***Spawn #s 15-20*** are collected in this fourth volume of ***Spawn*** reprints.

Stormwatch: Change the World TPB *(Image, $9.95)* -

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The early Warren Ellis issues of this series (*Stormwatch #s 37-40*) are reprinted for those who didn't discover the revamp until after those issues totally sold out.

Superman: The Death of Clark Kent TPB (*DC, $19.95*) - Superman's war with Conduit—in reality Clark Kent's old acquaintance Kenny Braverman—is compiled in one hefty edition.

Supreme Collected Edition Volume 1 (*Awesome, $4.95*) - Reprinting Supreme #s 41 & 42, the first two Alan Moore revamp issues.

Too Much Coffee Man's Guide for the Perplexed TPB (*Adhesive, $14.95*) - It's Shannon Wheeler time! All those early Too Much Coffee Man appearances in *Jab Comics* and *Dark Horse Presents* are served up, steaming hot and ready to enjoy.

Uncle Scrooge Adventures in Color Vol 25 (*Gladstone, $8.95*) - Carl Barks' classic "Flying Dutchman" story is reprinted in this high-quality edition.

Uncle Scrooge Adventures: Don Rosa 1997 Special Volume 3 (*Gladstone, $9.95*) - Hard-to-find Don Rosa material from Gladstone's first Disney run is made available once again.

Widow: The Complete Works Volume 1—Flesh & Blood TPB (*Ground Zero, $10.95*) - Compilation of the first *Widow* miniseries.

WildCATs: A Gathering of Eagles TPB (*Image, $9.95*) - Re-presenting ***WildCATs #s 10-13***.

In the Cards

(Highlighting June's Trading Card Releases)

Alternative Cartoonist Collector Card Series I: Dig (*Brownfield Press, $3.50/set*) - Twelve-card series spotlighting beat poets, cutting edge comedians, and general zanies as illustrated by JR Williams.

Alternative Cartoonist Collector Card Series I: Frank (*Brownfield Press, $3.50/set*) - Twelve-card series featuring Jim Woodring's Frank and his associates.

Alternative Cartoonist Collector Card Series I: Wet Dreams (*Brownfield Press, $3.50/set*) - Twelve-card series illustrated by Shary Flenniken, exploring the symbolism of dreams.

Babylon 5 Special Edition Trading Cards (*Fleer, 2.00/pack*) - New 72-card series focusing on the cult-favorite syndicated television show; includes a retrospective look at the pilot episode, an overview f the ships and alien races in the series, Babylon 5 trivia, history, and more, with commentary by J. Michael Straczynski.

Kiss Preview Card Set (*Cornerstone, $11.95/set*) - Special nine-card foil-stamped card set previewing the deluxe card series coming up next month.

Lady Death Mega Chromium Trading Cards (*Krome, $2.95/pack*) - New series of enormous 4"x6" chromium cards featuring Lady Death, Evil Ernie, Purgatori, Chastity, and other Chaos characters as illustrated by Steven Hughes, Justiniano, Jim Balent, David Mack, and others.

Marvel QFX Trading Cards (*Fleer, $2.50/pack*) - 72 card series featuring Joe Quesada artwork combined with high-resolution photographs of real Manhattan settings, giving an ultra-realistic look to the card series.

Mask Animated Trading Cards (*Inkworks, $2.00/pack*) - 81-card series with zaniness from past and present episodes of the Dark Horse Comics inspired cartoon.

Men in Black Trading Cards (*Inkworks, $2.25/pack*) - Movie photo cards featuring the entire film story plus character profiles, weaponry, gadgets, alien profiles, and more.

Power Rangers Turbo Trading Cards (*Bandai, $2.00/pack*) - Sixty card series depicting the latest incarnation of the Power Rangers.

Razor Mega Chromium Card Preview Set (*Krome, $11.95/set*) - Special preview series of 4"x6" cards featuring Razor as illustrated by Stephen Sandoval.

Spider-Man Trading Cards (*Fleer, 99¢/pack*) - New bargain-priced 50 card series also includes three OverPower game cards and one mini-mag in each pack.

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Profiles Trading Cards (*Fleer, $2.50/pack*) - 81 cards, subdivided into nine-card sets, that offer in-depth info on the show's nine major heroes

Tick Collector's Cards (*Comic Images, $1.75/pack*) - 72-card series featuring episode cards, comic art, chromium chase cards, and 500 ultra-rare Ben-Edlund-autographed cards.

Top Cow Showcase: Painted Cow Collector's Cards (*Comic Images, 1.75/pack*) - 72 painted cards featuring art depicting heroes from ***Cyberforce, The Darkness, Weapon Zero,*** and ***Witchblade***, painted by Steve Firchow, Richard Isanove, Jonathan Smith, Dean White, Marc Silvestri, and others. Includes both chromium and autographed chase cards.

Hit the Deck!

(June CCG Highlights)

Aliens Vs. Predator CCG (*Harper Collins, $8.95/starter, $2.95/booster*) - New 300+ card game based n both the Aliens and Predator films, featuring visuals from the various movies.

Imagica CCG (*Harper Collins, $15.00/starter, $2.50/booster*) - 300+ cards bring Clive Barker's startling fantasy world to life; each starter includes two fifty card decks so that two players can immediately get into the game.

Lord of the Rings Tarot Deck and Game (*US Game, $90.00*) - Beautiful Tarot deck features art inspired by Tolkien's classic fantasy tale; also includes an original card game created by Mike Fitzgerald.

Magic: The Gathering—Portal (*Wizards of the Coast, $8.95/starter, $2.95/booster, $19.95/gift box*) - A new beginners' version of MTG; ach starter includes two 35-card decks with simple instructions designed to make it easy for newcomers to get into the game. The gift box includes two starters, glass counters, a storage back, a checklist, and a box.

Magic: The Gathering—Weather Light Boosters (*$2.95/pack*) - A limited expansion set that can be used with any version of MTG; over 160 black-bordered cards add to the ***Magic*** fun.

Middle Earth: Against the Shadow CCG Expansion (*Iron Crown, $2.95/pack*) - Expansion set fully compatible with ***Middle Earth: The Wizards*** and ***Lidless Eye;*** offers over 150 new cards.

Star Trek CCG: Alien Encounters Boosters (*Fleer, $2.95/pack*) - 160-card expansion featuring classic ***Star Trek*** characters such as Sarek, Amanda, and Zephran Cochrane.

X-Files 22364 Expansion Series (*US Playing Cards, $3.00/pack*) - New expansion for the popular X-Files CCG features oodles of concepts from the third season of the show, with a focus on Scully (whose birthday just happens to be 2/23/64).

In The Beginning There Was...Genesis!

Get ready for the crossover event of the summer as **DC Comics** unleashes **Genesis!** Darkseid is on the rampage and it's going to effect every book in the DC Universe! On the back cover, it's **Spawn: The Movie!** Take a look as the hell-bound demon gets ready to attack the silver screen! Yow!

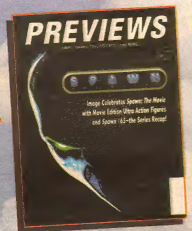
Don't Miss the June Issue!

If You Miss *PREVIEWS*, You'll Miss:

- A chat with **Rikki Rockett** and the rest of the boys from **No Mercy** comics!
- A **Parting Shot** written by **Fantagraphics** publisher **Gary Groth**
- The chance to win killer **Spawn** prizes in celebration of HBO's new **Spawn** animated videos!

Special *PREVIEWS* Comics:

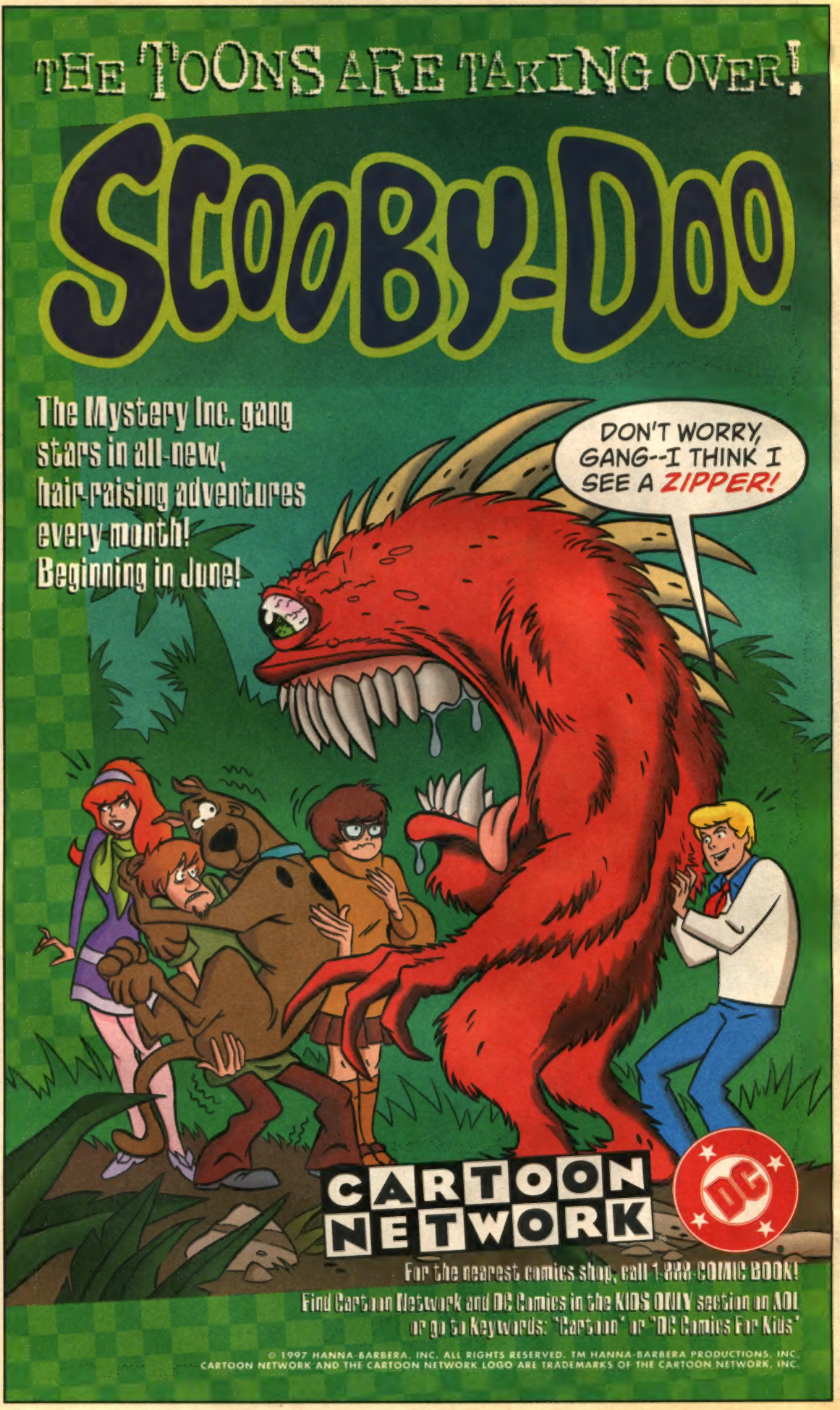
- **Usagi Yojimbo** from **Dark Horse Comics** emerges from the ashes ready to fight for his life.
- It's a heaping helping of lunacy and straight out goofiness from **The Mask** from **Dark Horse Comics!**
- Plus, a special preview of **The X-Files** from **Topps Comics!**



All this—plus the latest advance information on your favorite comics and collectibles—awaits you in the next edition of *PREVIEWS*!

Available May 30

The excitement's inside a fine comics shop near you!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